

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 ACDA-07

AID-05 AGRE-00 TRSE-00 CU-02 /087 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LIMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5754

INFO AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY QUITO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 6004

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PINS, ELAB, PE

SUBJECT: GOP MOVES DO DISPEL COUP RUMORS; ATTEMPTS TO CURB
STRIKES

REF: LIMA 5955, LIMA 5988

1. IN A CAREFULLY ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGN TO DISPEL RUMORS OF
HIGH-LEVEL CHANGES IN THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT (REFTELS) AND TO
PRESENT AN IMAGE OF STABILITY IN THE FACE OF A CALLED-FOR
GENERAL STRIKE JULY 19, THE GOP GAVE PRIMINENT PRESS PLAY
TO FOLLOWING MEASURES IN JULY 16 NEWSPAPERS: 1) FOOD MINISTER
GENERAL RAFAEL HOYOS RUBIO, ONE OF THE RUMORED CONSPIRATORS,
ANNOUNCED THAT PRICES FOR FOOD STAPLES WOULD BE CONTROLLED AND
WOULD NOT RISE; 2) FINANCE MINISTER GENERAL ALCIBIADES SAENZ
BARSALLO ANNOUNCED THAT A "NEW ECONOMIC POLITY" WOULD BE DECIDED
UPON JULY 19 (THE DAY OF THE PROPOSED STRIKE) AND PRESENTED TO
THE PUBLIC JULY 26; 3) LABOR MINISTER GENERAL LUIS UGARELLI
VALLE CALLED IN LABOR LEADERS OF ALL MAJOR LABOR CONFEDERATIONS
AND, ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS ACCOUNTS, TOLD
THEM THAT THE GOP "UNDERSTANDS" THE SEVERE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WORK-
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ERS ARE FACING AND PROMISED THAT NEW ECONOMIC AND LABOR MEASURES
WOULD BE PROMULGATED SHORTLY; 4) EDUCATION MINISTER GENERAL OTTO
ELESPURU REVOREDO ANNOUNCED SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY VACATIONS WILL
START JULY 18, ONE WEEK EARLY; 5) SALARY INCREASES RECENTLY
EXTENDED TO OTHER LABOR SECTORS WERE ANNOUNCED FOR FARM WORKERS.
IN ADDITION TO THE FRONT-PAGE PRESS ATTENTION GIVEN THESE ANNOUNCE-
MENTS, THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE PRESS COVERAGE OF AN UNHERALDED

CEREMONY (WAR MATERIEL DAY) ATTENDED BY PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ, PRIME MINISTER GHILLERMO ARBULU GALLIANI, AND ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF PEDRO RICHTER PRADA, ALL OF WHOM HAVE FIGURED PROMINENTLY IN GOVERNMENT UPHEAVAL RUMORS.

2. JULY 17 NEWSPAPERS PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED PHOTOS OF PRESIDENT MORALES TALKING BY TELEPHONE TO THE NATIONAL SOCCER TEAM PRIOR TO THEIR IMPORTANT MATCH WITH BOLIVIA. INTERIOR MINISTER LUIS CISNEROS VIZQUERRA WAS REPORTED AS SAYING THAT THE "ARMED FORCES AND POLICE FORCES ARE MORE UNITED THAN EVER" AND THAT CABINET SHAKE-UP RUMORS CIRCULATING THROUGHOUT LIMA WERE DESIGNED SOLELY TO CREATE DISORDER AND WERE FALSE.

3. JULY 18 NEWSPAPERS ANNOUNCE THAT INTERIOR MINISTER CISNEROS WILL TALK TO THE NATION ON THE EVE OF THE THREATENED JULY 19 GENERAL STRIKE CONCERNING THE "PRESENT SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY". EDITORIALS DENOUNCE THE STRIKE, THE MOSCOW-LINE (CGTP) LABOR CONFEDERATION, AND FAR-LEFT (SUTEP) TEACHERS UNION. INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE WEEKLY EL TIEMPO APPEARS TWO DAYS EARLY WITH THE BANNER HEADLINE "TOMORROW IS RED TUESDAY" AND A DENUNCIATION OF THE CGTP AND THE PERUVIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCP).

4. COMMENT: AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF RUMORS OF GOVERNMENT INSTABILITY AND CONFUSION, THE GOP HAS MOVED TO GIVE THE APPEARANCE OF A SOLID FRONT PRIOR TO THREATENED JULY 19 COMMUNIST INSPIRED GENERAL STRIKE. WHILE THE GOP HAS THE POLICE AND

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MILITARY POWER TO WEATHER THE 24-HOUR WORK STOPPAGE AND THE POSSIBLE STUDENT AND LABOR VIOLENCE THAT MAY ACCOMPANY THE STRIKE IF IT OCCURS, IT WILL BE HARD PRESSED TO COME UP WITH AN EFFECTIVE (NEW) ECONOMIC PROGRAM TO SOLVE ITS LONG-RANGE PROBLEMS OF INFLATION, UNEMPLOYMENT, AND LAGGING PRODUCTION.

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